

What is Claimed Is:

1. A method for formatting electronic mail sent from an e-mail client and received by a gateway server for receiving and processing inbound e-mail or a gateway server for receiving and processing outbound e-mail, comprising the steps of:

receiving an e-mail message from the e-mail composer;

text-parsing the received e-mail for identifying the e-mail attribute;

formatting the received e-mail message in accordance with predetermined formats corresponding to the identified the e-mail attribute;

sending the formatted e-mail message to intended recipient(s).

2. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 1, wherein the step of identifying the e-mail attribute comprises the step of identifying the e-mail attribute from a header of the received e-mail.

3. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 2, wherein the e-mail attribute includes any one of sender, date, author, recipient information, priority information, language, and country of origin in the header.

4. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 1, wherein the step of identifying the e-mail attribute comprises the step of identifying e-mail attribute from a body of the received e-mail.

5. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 4, wherein the e-mail attribute includes a predetermined keyword in the body of the e-mail.

6. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 1, further comprising the step of associating a predetermined format in accordance with an identified e-mail attribute.

7. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 6, wherein the predetermined formats include any combination of a plurality of templates.

8. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 7, wherein the plurality of templates include any one of a graphic, background image, sound file, video file, hypertext, user information, company information, and digital signature.

9. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 6, wherein the step of associating the predetermined format includes accessing a library compiling predetermined formats and selecting the predetermined format in accordance with e-mail attribute.

10. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of extracting an e-mail portion from the e-mail corresponding to any one of a new message portion, a reply portion, and a forwarded portion.

11. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 10, further comprising formatting the extracted e-mail portion according to an e-mail attribute of the extracted e-mail portion.

12. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 11, further comprising determining an e-mail client associated with the e-mail portion.

13. The method for formatting electronic mail according to claim 1, further comprising forcing a predetermined format by user override.

14. An apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail, comprising:  
a server;  
at least one client station in communication with the server, the at least one client station configured for sending e-mail to the server or receiving e-mail from the server, the server including:  
an e-mail formatter for identifying an e-mail attribute by text-parsing the e-mail sent from the at least one client station;  
a template manager for assigning a predetermined format in accordance with the e-mail attribute;  
a message assembler for assembling an e-mail in accordance with a specific format designated by the assigned predetermined format.

15. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 14, wherein the e-mail formatter includes a header extractor for identifying any one of sender, sent date, recipient information, priority information, language, and country of origin in the header.

16. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 14, wherein the e-mail formatter includes a message extractor for identifying a keyword in the body of the e-mail.

17. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 14, wherein the e-mail formatter includes a message extractor for identifying an e-mail portion of the e-mail corresponding to any one of a new message portion, a reply portion, and a forwarded portion.

18. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 14, wherein the template manager includes a template manager interface, a template assigner, and a template library each in communication with one another.

19. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 18, wherein a database compiles the template library for storing a predetermined format.

20. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 19, wherein the predetermined format includes any one of a graphic, background image, sound file, video file, hypertext, user information, company information, digital signature each associated with at least one e-mail attribute.

21. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 14, wherein the server receives and processes inbound e-mail.

22. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 14, wherein the server receives and processes outbound e-mail.

23. The apparatus for automatically formatting electronic mail according to claim 14, wherein the server is a server integrated with post-office properties of a mail server.

24. A program product, comprising executable code transportable by at least one machine readable medium, wherein execution of the code by at least one programmable computer causes the at least one programmable computer to perform a sequence of steps, comprising:

text-parsing an e-mail received from an e-mail client for identifying an e-mail attribute in the header or body of the e-mail;

formatting the e-mail in accordance with a predetermined format corresponding to the identified e-mail attribute;

sending the formatted e-mail message to intended recipient(s).

25. The program product according to claim 24, wherein the e-mail attribute in the header includes any one of sender, date, recipient information, priority information, language, and country of origin.

26. The program product according to claim 24, wherein the e-mail attribute in the body includes a predetermined keyword in the body of the e-mail.

27. The program product according to claim 24, further comprising the step of determining an e-mail portion of the e-mail corresponding to any one of a new message portion, a reply portion, and a forwarded portion.

28. The program product according to claim 24, further comprising the step of associating a predetermined format in accordance with the identified e-mail attribute.

29. The program product according to claim 28, wherein the predetermined format includes any combination of a plurality of templates.

30. The program product according to claim 24, wherein the plurality of templates include any one of a graphic, background image, sound file, video file, hypertext, user information, company information, and digital signature.